

Warminster Rural District

Warminster, January 29th, 1898.
MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

It is again my duty to present to you my annual report as to the health and sanitary condition of the district during the year.

From the tabular forms accompanying this report, it will be seen that the deaths of 105 persons were registered. This would give a death-rate for the year of 14.09 per 1,000. The ages of death ranged from 20 minutes to 93 years, and 18 deaths occurred of persons over 80 years of age. With regard to seasons, there were 38 deaths in the first quarter, 20 in the second, 24 in the third, and 23 in the fourth.

The births numbered 155, equivalent to a birth-rate of 20.8 per 1,000. The death-rate of young children under one year is above the average, 19 deaths having occurred at that age, but in this number were included the deaths of eight infants only a few days old. One death occurred from scarlet fever, and two from whooping cough.

I will now refer to the presence of infectious diseases during the year.

Diphtheria.—Only four mild cases of this disease were notified to me—two in January, at Horningsham and Stockton, one in March at Tytherington, and one in August at Corsley.

Scarlet fever.—Seventeen cases were reported to me. A rather sharp outbreak of this disease occurred at Upton Scudamore, ten cases coming to my notice within a few days of each other, due to a pupil attending the elementary school in the incipient stage. The school was closed for a few days for disinfecting purposes, and no fresh case occurred on the re-opening; but the children of the infected families were prohibited from attending.

Enteric fever.—Six cases were reported to me, four occurring in one family. Careful inspection of the premises failed to reveal any local insanitary condition; but I think the first case was caused by drinking water from a pond whilst at his work, and the remaining cases were due to infection from this one. The water supply was from a well used by three other houses in the vicinity, and an analysis was found satisfactory. The remaining cases were infected outside the district, and call for no remarks.

The water supply is varied but abundant. Deep and shallow wells abound, as well as natural springs, and in two of the villages there is a proper supply, one source of supply being a deep well rising some distance from the village, and is carefully guarded from pollution, and although some of the shallow wells are liable to pollution from surface water, and occasionally you find an old well which from constant leakage has become polluted, yet, as a whole, the supply of water is pure and ample; and in no case for many years have I been able to trace any outbreak to water pollution.

Systematic inspection of the whole district has been carried out in conjunction with the Inspector of Nuisances, and the bakehouses and slaughterhouses were found to be kept in accordance with the byelaws, and the provisions of the Cowsheds and Dairies Order were, in most instances, properly complied with. The general character of the cottages (especially those of older construction) is on a par with other agricultural localities, but of late years great improvement has taken place in their condition, many of the older ones having been pulled down, some repaired, and new ones erected in many of the villages. The surroundings of the tenements of the poorer classes are improving, slops and house refuse are not allowed to accumulate near the house, closets are removed to a proper distance, and where possible the pail or dry earth system is recommended. The old type of privy is still very much in vogue; but by degrees is being replaced by those of more improved construction.

Bedroom accommodation is generally defective, particularly in those cottages of older construction, and fireplaces are an exception rather than the rule.

Two outbreaks of anthrax in cattle were reported to me. In one case the sale of the milk from the dairy was prohibited, which was not necessary in the other, as the diseased animal had no connection with the dairy cows.

No part of the district is supplied with public sewers, except a small part of Bishopstow. Sewage disposal is by ordinary privies for the smaller occupants, but for houses of the better class, each provides his own system of sewerage, which, as a rule, consists of large cemented cesspools; but in some instances the drainage is discharged direct into the river.

With this report I submit the tables supplied by the Local Government Board, one of which deals with the mortality in the district, and the other with the births, and new cases of infectious disease coming to my knowledge.—I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, yours faithfully,

FREDERICK J. FLOWER,
Medical Officer of Health to the Council.

TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS, AND OF NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the year 1897, in the Warminster Rural District; classified according to DISEASES, AGE and LOCALITIES.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.	Population at all ages. Last Census.	Estimated population of 1897.	Registered Births.	Aged under 5 or over 5.	New Cases of Sickness in each locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.		
					Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Enteric or Typhoid Fever.
Registrar's Sub-district of Heytesbury.	8317	8309	62	Under 5 5 upwd.	1	1	2
Sub-district of Corsley.	2338	2331	46	Under 5 5 upwd.	2	1	4
Sub-district of Horningsham.	1815	1810	47	Under 5 5 upwd.	1	1	
Totals	7470	7450	155	Under 5 5 upwd.	4	1	6

TABLE OF DEATHS During the year 1897, in the Warminster Rural District, classified according to Diseases, Ages, and Localities.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics, public institutions being shown as separate localities.	Mortality from all causes, at subjoined ages.						Mortality from subjoined causes, distinguished deaths of children under five years of age.								
	At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.	Scarlatina	Whooping Cough	Phtisis	Bronchitis, Pneumonia & Pleurisy	Heart Disease	Injuries	All other Diseases	Total
Registrar's sub-district of Heytesbury.....	38	7	1	1	4	9	15	1	1	7	6	6		7	8
Sub-district of Corsley	35	9	2	2		6	17		1	1	4	6	1	5	11
Sub-district of Horningsham	32	3				5	24			1	11	5	1	2	8
Total	105	19	3	3	4	20	56	1	1	9	5	17	2	14	22

The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into account in judging of the above records of mortality:—

Names of localities adopted for the purpose of these statistics, public institutions being shown as separate localities.	At all ages	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards	Scarlatina	All other diseases	Total
Deaths occurring outside the district among persons belonging thereto ..	4		1	3			4
Deaths occurring within the district among persons not belonging thereto	1	1			1		1

